(c) the number of fishing boats captured during the last two years; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to bring them back to their families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) As per information received from the Government of Gujarat, 100 Indian fishermen and 17 boats have been apprehended by Pakistan Maritime Security Agency in January and February this year. Subsequently, there have been reports that another 94 fishermen and 16 boats have been taken in custody by Pakistani authorities on March 4th and 5th, 2002.

(c) Pakistan apprehended a total of 320 Indian fishermen and 53 boats during the last two years *i.e.* 2000 and 2001. All these fishermen with their boats were got released and repatriated to India in November/December, 2001.

(d) Government have taken up the issue of release and repatriation of recently apprehended Indian fishermen/boats with the Government of Pakistan through diplomatic channels.

Indo-Nepal agreement to monitor borders

1253. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Nepal have entered into an agreement to monitor the borders and to prevent flow of arms and ammunitions to terrorists and Maoists;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether despite agreement flow of arms and ammunitions and terrorists continue from borders of Nepal; and

(d) if so, the further strategy to be adopted by Government to prevent entry of arms and ammunitions and terrorists from the Nepal borders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) The Government is concerned about the misuse of the open India-Nepal border for activities inimical to the interest of the two countries by vested interests and is seized of the matter. The Governments of India and Nepal have agreed that they would not allow their respectrive territories to be used for such activities.

Measures have been taken to enhance co-operation with Nepal, particularly with regard to implementing effective border management. A bilateral institutional mechanism has also been evolved which includes a Joint Working Group on Border Management and Home Secretary Level Talks to jointly address issues relating to maintenance of peace and security and prevention of criminal activities in the India-Nepal border areas. The Special Service Bureau is being deployed along the border with Nepal to strengthen security in the border areas.

Discussion with British Foreign Secretary

1254. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government held discussion recently with visiting U.K. Foreign Secretary Mr. Jack Straw and apprised him regarding attack on the Parliament on 13th December, 2001;

(b) whether U.K. Foreign Secretary publicly accused Pakistan and demanded a firm/much more effective action against activities of Kashmiri terrorists operating from Pakistan and against "calling terrorists as freedom fighters" as reported in Hindustan Times dated 29th December 2001; and

(c) if so, the other countries with whom India held similar talks recently and outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) During his visit to India on 27 February 2002, U.K.'s Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs, Mr. Jack Straw met